



108

# Greatest Of All Times

*GLOBALLY SELECTED  
PERSONALITIES*

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20 Jul 1919 <::><::><::> 11 Jan 2008

IT'S NOT THE MOUNTAIN WE CONQUER,  
BUT OURSELVES.

Edmund Hillary



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## Publications

Title	Year	Publisher	ISBN/ASIN	Co-author
<i>High Adventure</i>	1955	Hodder & Stoughton	<a href="#">ISBN 1-932302-02-6</a>	n/a
<i>East of Everest – An Account of the New Zealand Alpine Club Himalayan Expedition to the Barun Valley in 1954</i>	1956	E. P. Dutton	<a href="#">ASIN B000EW84UM</a>	George Lowe
<i>No Latitude for Error</i>	1961	Hodder & Stoughton.	<a href="#">ASIN B000H6UVP6</a>	n/a
<i>The New Zealand Antarctic Expedition</i>	1959	R.W. Stiles, printers.	<a href="#">ASIN B0007K6D72</a>	n/a
<i>The Crossing of Antarctica: The Commonwealth Transantarctic Expedition, 1955–1958</i>	1958	Cassell	<a href="#">ASIN B000HJGZ08</a>	<a href="#">Vivian Fuchs</a>
<i>High in the Thin Cold Air</i>	1962	Doubleday	<a href="#">ASIN B00005W121</a>	Desmond Doig

<i>Schoolhouse in the Clouds</i>	1965	Hodder & Stoughton	<a href="#">ASIN B00005WRBB</a>	n/a
<i>Nothing Venture, Nothing Win</i>	1975	Hodder & Stoughton	<a href="#">ISBN 0-340-21296-9</a>	n/a
<i>From the Ocean to the Sky: Jet Boating Up the Ganges</i>	1979	Viking	<a href="#">ISBN 0-7089-0587-0</a>	n/a
<i>Two Generations</i>	1984	Hodder & Stoughton	<a href="#">ISBN 0-340-35420-8</a>	Peter Hillary
<i>View from the Summit: The Remarkable Memoir by the First Person to Conquer Everest</i>	2000	Pocket	<a href="#">ISBN 0-7434-0067-4</a>	n/a

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**Mount Everest, Nuptse and the Khumbu Icefall at sunset in the Nepalese Himalayas.**





15 Ways to the Top of Mount Everest: 1953 British Expedition, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, via the Western Cwm and the South Col, May 29. The two climbers, Hillary from New Zealand and Norgay from Nepal, were part of a British climbing team. The team made their first camp below the Khumbu Ice Fall, a steep, rugged, and fast-moving section of the Khumbu Glacier. The dark lines that cut across the icefall resemble waves, hinting at the constant movement that opens deep crevasses and sends large chunks of ice tumbling freely down the mountain. After successfully crossing the Khumbu Icefall, the team walked up the Western Cwm. The glacial valley is smooth in this image, lacking the relief shown by the steep ridges around it. The Western Cwm leads to the south face of Lhotse and the South Col, a saddle between the pyramid-like peaks of Everest and Lhotse. At 7,920 m (26,000 ft), the South Col is typically the last camp on an Everest ascent, but Hillary and Norgay made their final camp an additional 610 meters (2,000 feet) above this point. A five-hour climb brought Hillary and Norgay to the top of the world.

Please visit the Web Link:

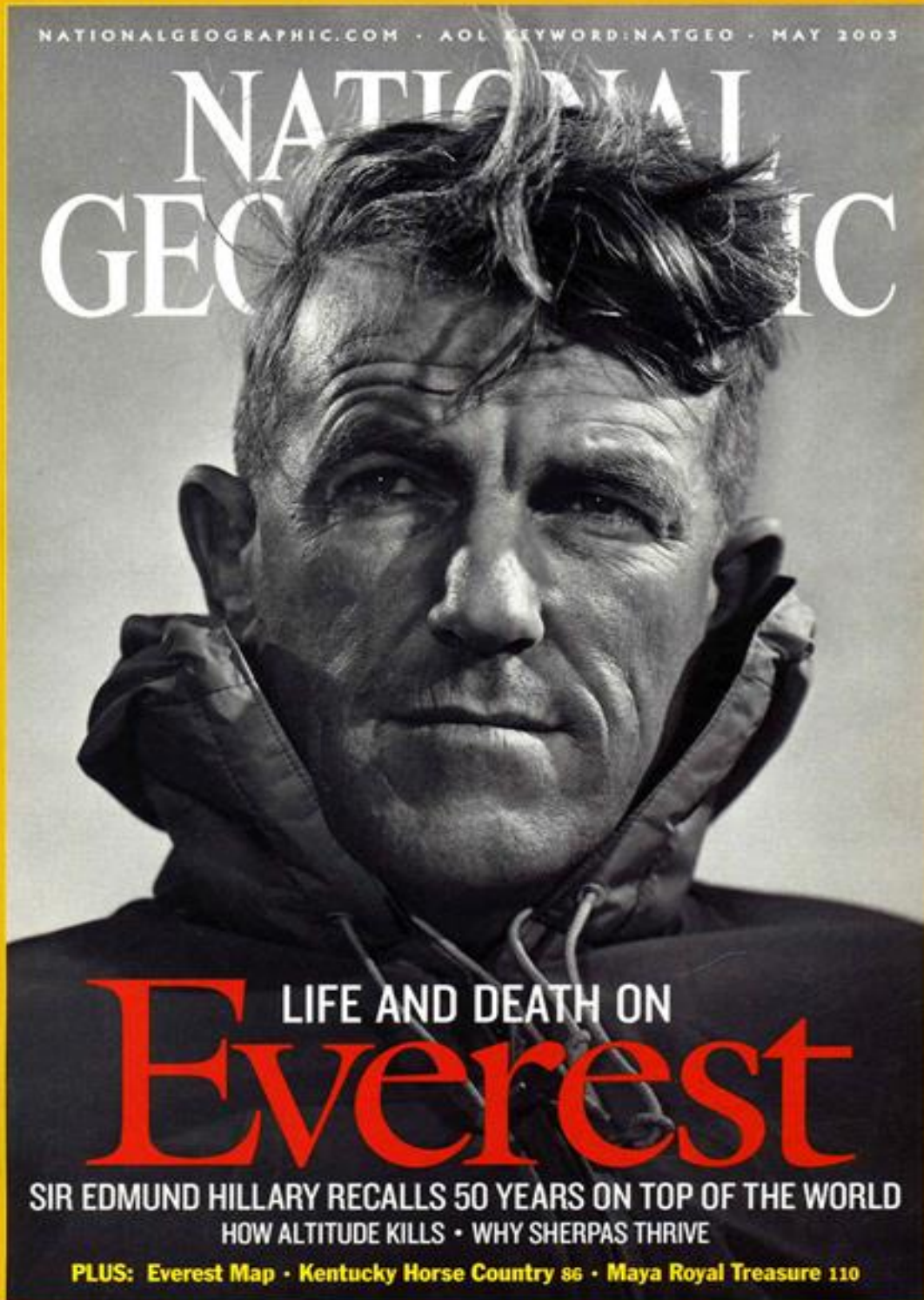
<https://achievement.org/achiever/sir-edmund-hillary/>



WATCH "SURVIVING EVEREST," NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL, SUN., APRIL 27, 8 P.M.

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LIFE AND DEATH ON  
**Everest**

SIR EDMUND HILLARY RECALLS 50 YEARS ON TOP OF THE WORLD  
HOW ALTITUDE KILLS • WHY SHERPAS THRIVE

PLUS: Everest Map • Kentucky Horse Country 86 • Maya Royal Treasure 110

This 2003 issue of *National Geographic* celebrated the 50th anniversary of Edmund Hillary's conquest of Everest.

# Biography

<https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/6h1/hillary-edmund-percival>

## Early life

On 29 May 1953 New Zealander Edmund Hillary and Nepali Tenzing Norgay, as part of a British team, reached the 8,848-metre summit of Mt Everest, the world's highest mountain. This was the culmination of 12 serious attempts since 1921, including nine British expeditions. It coincided with the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, adding to the media attention generated by the royal event.

Climbing Everest was a life-changing experience for a man with a humble background. Edmund Percival Hillary, born on 20 July 1919 at Auckland, was the second of three children of Percival Augustus Hillary and his wife, Gertrude Hillary, née Clark. The family lived in Tūākau, in rural South Auckland.

Percy Hillary founded and edited the *Tuakau District News*, and as a sideline, took up beekeeping on land allotted to him after service in the First World War. He believed in healthy eating and exercise and had strong egalitarian beliefs. Percy was also a strict disciplinarian, and the young Edmund found his beatings for misdemeanours humiliating and often unjust. However, in his mother, Gertrude (a teacher), he found a more gentle and nurturing parent.

After attending Tūākau Primary School Edmund went to Auckland Grammar School. Small and shy with a poor self-image, he nursed secret desires for adventure, and read books about mountains and the Antarctic on the long train journeys to and from school.

In his middle teenage years Hillary grew tall, and through boxing found some physical confidence. A school ski trip to Mt Ruapehu in 1935 gave him his first experience of mountains. 'I returned home in a glow of fiery enthusiasm for the sun and the cold and the snow – especially the snow.' That year the family moved to Remuera Road, Auckland, although Percy still had more than 1,000 beehives on South Auckland farms.

After leaving school Edmund spent two unsuccessful years at Auckland University College, then in 1938 joined his father and brother as a full-time beekeeper. He read widely and considered his beliefs. Hillary absorbed

some of his father's passion for social justice and Christian ideals, which he later tempered into an agnostic but compassionate and optimistic world-view.

### **Early mountaineering**

The heavy beekeeping work made Hillary fit. Despite its demands, he made excursions into the Waitākere Ranges with the Radiant Living Tramping Club, an adjunct of the School of Radiant Living, which taught a holistic philosophy of physical, psychological and spiritual health. Here, Hillary discovered joy in the outdoors, love of the bush and the ability to carry a heavy pack. But by 1940 he was ready for higher hills. On a short Southern Alps holiday he made a modest scramble up Mt Ollivier (1,933 metres) on the Sealy Range above Mount Cook village: 'the happiest day I had ever spent'. It was his first ascent.

Early in 1944, Hillary joined the Royal New Zealand Air Force. He had first applied in 1939, but had doubts, withdrew his application and registered as a conscientious objector. RNZAF training camps in Blenheim and New Plymouth provided him with opportunities to climb Mt Tapuae-o-Uenuku (in the Inland Kaikōuras) and Mt Taranaki. His solo climb of Tapuae-o-Uenuku demonstrated formidable physicality: a 32-kilometre walk up the Awatere Valley, a long tramp up the Hodder River and a 14-hour climb, followed by the Hodder and Awatere walks in reverse – all in a weekend.

Hillary qualified as a navigator and was posted in 1945 to Fiji and then the Solomon Islands, where he was badly burnt in a boating accident. After a fast recovery, and the end of the war, he returned to New Zealand and climbed his first 3,000-metre peaks – Mts Malte Brun and Hamilton in the Southern Alps.

Despite his ability and superb fitness, Hillary still lacked technical mountaineering proficiency. However, in 1946 he met [Harry Ayres](#), probably the most talented mountain guide of his generation, and over the next three summers the pair climbed several peaks including New Zealand's three highest – Aoraki/Mt Cook, Mt Tasman and Mt Dampier. Under Ayres's tutelage Hillary became one of the country's best climbers. During his career he ascended 16 of New Zealand's 34 peaks over 3,000 metres.

Hillary and Ayres's most significant ascent was the South Ridge of Aoraki/Mt Cook, its last major unclimbed ridge, with Mick Sullivan and Ruth Adams in 1948. Three days later, the same four were nearing the summit of nearby

Mt La Perouse when a rope snapped and Adams fell, badly injuring herself. Hermitage Chief Guide Mick Bowie decided to evacuate the party down the rugged Cook Valley. These involved dozens of rescuers, many of whom were needed to cut a track down the heavily gorged river.

The episode brought several leading mountaineers into contact; significantly, Hillary met Earle Riddiford. Two years later, Hillary was to spend a storm-bound week in the Haast Hut with Hastings teacher George Lowe, with whom he discussed Himalayan climbing.

After Hillary's father retired in 1949, he continued as a beekeeper, but brother Rex held the business together during Hillary's increasingly long mountaineering absences.

In April 1950, flush with money after a bumper honey harvest from the season before, Hillary sailed to England to meet his sister, June, who had married an English doctor and was living in London. They toured Europe with their parents and Hillary scaled some 4,000-metre peaks in the Alps before returning to New Zealand.

### **The Himalayas**

Hillary's Himalayan aspirations were realised in 1950 when New Zealand climber Earle Riddiford invited him to tackle some of the world's highest peaks. Riddiford had made first ascents in remote parts of the Southern Alps in the late 1940s. He also recruited George Lowe and Ed Cotter. Ambitious and organised, Riddiford used his persistence and legal skills to gain permission to climb in the Garhwal Himalaya of India.

On a training climb in January 1951, Riddiford, Hillary, Lowe and Cotter made the first traverse of the testing Maximilian Ridge of Mt Elie de Beaumont in the Southern Alps.

The four climbers left New Zealand in May 1951, and during June trekked into the Garhwal on the first all-New Zealand Himalayan expedition. They climbed five 6,000-metre peaks, with Hillary and Lowe forming perhaps the strongest climbing pair, although it was Riddiford and Cotter who summited the 7,240-metre Mukut Parbat after the other two turned back.

The success prompted the New Zealand Alpine Club to request – while the expedition was still in India – that two New Zealanders join the 1951 Everest reconnaissance expedition, to be led by Eric Shipton. Shipton



agreed, leading to an acrimonious debate amongst the New Zealanders. Riddiford and Hillary claimed the two places – to Lowe's disgust.

Riddiford and Hillary rushed to join Shipton's team in Nepal and headed into the Khumbu region. The expedition held little hope of reaching the summit through the steep and dangerous Khumbu Icefall; but Hillary and Shipton gained a view from a ridge on nearby Pumori that showed it was feasible, and a route was forced through. Among the expedition's Sherpas was Tenzing Norgay. Afterwards, Hillary joined Shipton in traversing several passes south-east of Everest, many of them the first crossings.

During the 1950s several European countries sought to climb the 14 8,000-metre Himalayan giants. Nations pinned their pride on specific mountains, with the French first succeeding on Annapurna in 1950. Everest remained the main prize.

Himalayan governments usually allowed only one annual Everest expedition, and prior to 1952 the British enjoyed a virtual monopoly. However, in 1952 a Swiss expedition gained the permit and reached 8,600 metres in a bold and almost successful assault. The British had to be content with a reconnoitre of Cho Oyu, an 8,000-metre peak straddling the Tibetan border. For this expedition they again invited Riddiford and Hillary, with the addition of Lowe, who with Hillary reached 6,800 metres on Cho Oyu before an icefall barred progress. More pass-hopping and exploration followed.

## **Everest**

For the 1953 British Everest expedition, Eric Shipton was replaced as leader by Colonel John Hunt, who applied military-style planning to the task. Himalayan climbing was a logistical race against the monsoon, establishing routes for porters to stock successively higher camps with oxygen, food and equipment.

Above the Khumbu Icefall, George Lowe pioneered a route up the steep Lhotse face to Everest's South Col. From there Charles Evans and Tom Bourdillon reached the South Summit, but got no further. The way was open for Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, both of whom had acclimatised well to form a close team.

Hillary carried about 27 kilograms – a heavy load at sea-level let alone in the rarefied air of Everest – to the final camp, whence he and Tenzing set

off on 29 May 1953. Beyond the point reached by Evans and Bourdillon they faced an unexpectedly steep barrier (later named 'the Hillary Step'). Here Hillary wedged himself between snow and rock and wriggled up. The way was clear to the summit.

Upon their safe return, Hillary made an infamous (and later regretted) comment to Lowe: 'Well George, we knocked the bastard off!' [3](#) Few New Zealand mountaineers of the time could match Hillary's energy and focus. However, there were a number of others who, with the right experience and chances, might have been able to reach the summit of Everest. Hillary's response to challenges, and some good luck, allowed him to achieve the sought-after climbing goal.

Hillary's life was changed forever. Before the expedition emerged from the mountains, the newly crowned Queen Elizabeth bestowed a knighthood on the bemused New Zealander. In Britain, he and Tenzing became the subject of media frenzy. They attended formal events and gave lectures to packed halls.

The ascent of Everest enhanced interest in mountaineering throughout the world. In New Zealand, Hillary and Everest helped turn mountaineering from a somewhat fringe activity into something that had new-found respect. More than half a century later, Hillary was still the world's most famous mountaineer.

Back in New Zealand, Hillary married Louise Rose, whom he had met and climbed with some years previously. The shy man did not have enough courage to ask her directly, and instead Louise's mother, Phyllis, made the proposal. On 3 September 1953 the wedding took place in the Diocesan School Chapel, Auckland, with George Lowe as best man.

Straight afterwards, Edmund, Louise and George Lowe departed for a five-month speaking tour of England and Europe.

Hillary and Lowe followed this with a New Zealand Himalayan expedition (Hillary's first test as a leader) with some of the country's best climbers. The expedition explored the little-known Barun valley, made a reconnaissance of Makalu (the world's fifth-highest mountain) and ascended 23 peaks including Baruntse (7,560 metres). When two climbers fell into a crevasse, one was badly injured. Hillary broke ribs during the rescue and – after later collapsing from exhaustion – was evacuated.

## After Everest

The Hillarys built a house in Remuera, Auckland, using proceeds from Edmund's first autobiography, *High adventure* (1955). Although still a partner in the beekeeping business, Hillary was increasingly busy elsewhere. For the rest of his life he made his living largely from expeditions and writing. His spare, understated, and often humorous style made his books highly readable, and altogether he penned or co-authored 10, the last his enormously successful *View from the summit* (1999).

The Hillarys' son Peter was born in December 1954 and was followed by two daughters, Sarah (1956) and Belinda (1959). Hillary enjoyed family life and liked gardening (especially roses) – but more expeditions awaited him. Peter was to follow in his father's footsteps by climbing Mt Everest twice, as well as many other mountains.

In 1955, the Ross Sea Committee asked Hillary to lead the New Zealand contingent of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic expedition, laying depots for British adventurer Vivian Fuchs, who was to make the first crossing of Antarctica. Hillary helped Fuchs to establish Shackleton Base in the summer of 1955–56, and learnt valuable lessons from what he thought was an amateurish and disorganised expedition.

The next summer, under Hillary's leadership, Scott Base was established on Ross Island (on the other side of Antarctica) and the first two depots were stocked. Hillary and 22 others wintered over in the new base before laying the depots with modified Massey Ferguson tractors. Having completed the task, Hillary, with [Peter Mulgrew](#), Jim Bates and Murray Ellis (dubbed 'The Old Firm'), dashed to the pole, arriving on 4 January 1958. They were the first to reach the South Pole overland since Robert Falcon Scott's tragic journey of 1911–12.

Hillary's radio message of 26 December 1957, 'We are heading hell-bent for the pole, God willing and crevasses permitting', caused a furore.<sup>4</sup> His role was supposed to be a supporting one only, and by reaching the pole 16 days ahead of Fuchs, he stole British thunder. This devil-may-care approach appealed to many New Zealanders, but some in authority – and some of Hillary's own team – viewed it as a breach of orders and an arrogant attempt to outplay Fuchs. However, the success of the venture ultimately overshadowed any ill feeling.

## Back in Nepal



In 1960–61, Hillary organised and led the Silver Hut Expedition to Nepal to do high-altitude research, make an oxygen-free attempt on Makalu, and search for the mythical yeti. No convincing evidence of yeti was found, but expedition members climbed Ama Dablam. However, Hillary's friend Peter Mulgrew lost both feet through frostbite after an accident on Makalu, and Hillary himself suffered from altitude sickness. In future years he was increasingly unable to acclimatise at altitude, even in the valleys, and Makalu marked the end of his high-altitude climbing.

During the 1960s, Hillary formed a partnership with two US companies: Field Enterprises Educational Corporation (an encyclopaedia producer) and large US outdoor equipment company Sears Roebuck, both of whom helped finance expeditions. He designed and tested Sears Roebuck tents, packs and other gear. His family took several US camping holidays, which Louise Hillary described in her book, *Keep calm if you can*.

Hillary's achievements on Everest and in Antarctica were greatly respected, but it was his subsequent humanitarian work that cemented his place as New Zealand's most revered son.

In 1960, Sherpas in the Khumbu region of Nepal told him that they badly wanted a school. Hillary wanted to improve their lives, particularly as they had put such effort into his expeditions. He asked the British Mt Everest Foundation (which had substantial funds), for money to build a school but was turned down. 'As the Sherpas have done so much for the British Himalayan expeditions, I considered this a miserable response and still have not forgiven them,' he later wrote.

Hillary raised the money himself, establishing what became known as the Himalayan Trust, and after the Silver Hut expedition of 1961 he supervised the building of Khumjung School.

Over successive decades, the Himalayan Trust built schools, airfields, bridges, hospitals and clinics in Nepal. It also restored Buddhist monasteries, including the famed Tengboche Monastery after it burnt down in January 1989. All this work was in response to needs expressed directly by the Sherpas, who called Hillary Burra Sahib, meaning 'big in heart.'

Hillary returned to Antarctica in 1967, leading a team that made the first ascent of Mt Herschel. In 1971 he completed a grand traverse of Aoraki/Mt Cook at the age of 52, and three years later made a first ascent of

Troglodyte Peak (1,810 metres) in Fiordland with his son, Peter, to end his climbing career.

Tragedy struck the Hillary family on 31 March 1975, when a plane crash in Nepal killed Louise and their younger daughter, Belinda. The bereft Hillary descended into depression and drinking. Not until two years later did he have energy for another enterprise. In 1977, he led a team of New Zealanders travelling by jet boat from the sea to the headwaters of the Ganges River, where they made a first ascent of Akash Parbat. Hillary suffered a debilitating bout of altitude sickness on the climb.

Disaster struck again in 1979, when Hillary's friend Peter Mulgrew was killed in the Air New Zealand Mt Erebus crash in Antarctica. Mulgrew's widow, June, also a friend, formed a closer relationship with Hillary in subsequent years.

### Later years

The same year, Prime Minister [David Lange](#) invited Hillary to become New Zealand's ambassador to India, as part of the country's effort to more closely align itself with Asia. Hillary relished the role. June Mulgrew joined him in New Delhi until he retired in 1989. That year the couple married on 21 December at Hillary's Remuera home.

In 1987, Hillary was inducted into the Order of New Zealand, and then in 1995 received the British Commonwealth's highest honour in becoming a Knight of the Garter. He also received honorary doctorates from universities around the world. In 2002, the Auckland War Memorial Museum displayed its 'Sir Edmund Hillary: Everest and beyond' exhibition, attracting thousands of people.

Despite failing health in later years, Hillary readily answered media requests for his views. He commented unfavourably on commercial climbs of Everest, especially regarding the 2006 death of a British climber who lay dying near the summit while others passed without offering help.

Some viewed Hillary's comments as a sound reflection on the competitive and commercial nature of modern Everest climbs, but others saw them as the outdated views of a man lucky enough to have experienced the golden decade of Himalayan climbing.

Despite such occasional controversies, Hillary remained New Zealand's most loved national figure. In 2003 the 50th anniversary of the Everest climb brought media fanfare. Magazines around the world, including *National Geographic*, ran articles on Hillary. *Vanity Fair* called him the world's greatest living adventurer, and *Time* rated him and Tenzing among the 100 most influential people of the 20th century.

Hillary's image of Tenzing Norgay on the summit of Everest is one of the most memorable of the 20th century, but by no means the only proficient photograph that he made. His photograph of a tractor chugging over the Ross Ice Shelf, with Mt Erebus bathed in dawn light, is a classic of exploration photography. His pictures of wife Louise and of alpine flowers suggest a man who took delight in portraits and in details, as well as in grand landscapes.

Hillary accepted with unfailing grace the responsibilities that his fame brought, including countless media appearances, book signings and requests to write forewords. Aside from his humanitarian work, another hallmark of his generosity was his mentoring of a new generation of climbers which included Graeme Dingle and Mike Gill.

Decades of hero-worship bemused him: 'I have had much good fortune, a fair amount of success and a share of sorrow, too. Ever since I reached the summit of Everest ... the media have classified me as a hero, but I have always recognised myself as being a person of modest abilities. My achievements have resulted from a goodly share of imagination and plenty of energy.'

Hillary's death on 11 January 2008 from heart failure at age 88 brought sorrow to New Zealanders. Commentators could recall no greater media attention since the 1974 death of Prime Minister [Norman Kirk](#). Newspapers ran multi-page supplements on Hillary, and his funeral was televised. As his casket was carried from Auckland's St Mary's Church, Alpine Club members held aloft old-style wood-shafted ice-axes. After Hillary's death, his work in Nepal continued through the Himalayan Trust.





# **Everest 1953: First Footsteps**

## **Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay**

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/adventure/article/sir-edmund-hillary-tenzing-norgay-1953>



**Edmund Hillary (left) and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay reached the 29,035-foot summit of Everest on May 29, 1953, becoming the first people to stand atop the world's highest mountain.**

National Geographic revisits the 1953 British summit to Everest when the first people stood atop the world's highest mountain.

*Excerpted From "50 Years on Everest," by Contributing Editor David Roberts, National Geographic Adventure, April 2003*

**B**y today's standards, the 1953 British expedition, under the military-style leadership of Sir John Hunt, was massive in the extreme, but in an oddly bottom-heavy way: 350 porters, 20 Sherpas, and tons of supplies to support a vanguard of only ten climbers. "Our climbers were all chosen as potential summiteers," recalls George Band, 73, who was one of the party. Fifty years later, Band's memory of the campaign remains undimmed. "The basic plan was for two summit attempts, each by a pair of climbers, with a possible third assault if necessary. On such expeditions the leader tends to designate the summit pairs quite late during the expedition, when he sees how everybody is performing." Anxiety over who is chosen for the summit team would be a hallmark of major Everest expeditions for decades to come. But never again would the stakes be quite so high.

By the spring of 1953, the ascent of the world's highest mountain was beginning to seem inevitable. First attempted in 1921 by the British, Everest had repulsed at least ten major expeditions and two lunatic solo attempts. With the 1950 discovery of a southern approach to the mountain in newly opened Nepal, and the first ascent of the treacherous Khumbu Icefall the following year, what would come to be known by the 1990s as the "yellow brick road" to the summit had been identified.

At first it seemed the Swiss would claim the prize. In 1952 a strong Swiss team that included legendary alpinist Raymond Lambert had pioneered the route up the steep Lhotse Face and reached the South Col. From that high, broad saddle, Lambert and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay then pushed all the way to 28,210 feet (8,598 meters) on the Southeast Ridge before turning back—probably as high as anyone had ever stood on Earth.

Now the British were determined to bring every possible advantage to their spring 1953 offensive—including hiring Tenzing, 38, as their lead Sherpa, or sirdar. Earlier British expeditions, though impressive in their accomplishments, were often charmingly informal in style. Hunt's intricately planned assault, on the other hand, was all business. "You get there fastest with the moistest," observes mountaineering pundit Ken Wilson. "You have a military leader who is totally in tune with that philosophy, and you don't dink around in an amateur sort of clubby way."

From the start, the 33-year-old beekeeper Edmund Hillary (not yet Sir Edmund) was a strong contender for one of the summit slots. "It was his fourth Himalayan expedition in just over two years and he was at the peak of fitness," Band says. The heavily glaciated peaks of his native New Zealand had proved a perfect training ground for the Himalaya. Hillary earned respect early in the expedition by leading the team that forced a route through the Khumbu Icefall. "A sleeves-rolled-up, get-things-done man," Wilson calls him.

Still, logistical snafus, the failure of a number of stalwarts to acclimatize, and problems with some of the experimental oxygen sets stalled the expedition badly. The team took a troubling 12 days to retrace the Swiss route on the Lhotse Face (in part, perhaps, because the British were not as experienced on difficult ice). In despair, Hunt began to wonder whether his party would even reach the South Col.

The expedition finally gained the col—the vital staging area for a summit push—on May 21. This was late enough to be worrisome, for the monsoon, whose heavy snows would prohibit climbing, could arrive as early as June 1.

Because they became the first men to reach the summit of Everest, Hillary and Tenzing would earn a celebrity that has



scarcely faded in 50 years. Who today remembers Tom Bourdillon and Charles Evans? Yet Hunt's plan called for Bourdillon, a former president of the Oxford Mountaineering Club, and Evans, a brain surgeon, to make the first summit bid.

Despite a relatively late start and problems with Evans's oxygen set, Bourdillon and Evans crested the South Summit—at 28,700 feet (8,748 meters), only 330 feet (101 meters) short of the top—by 1 p.m. on May 26. But Evans was exhausted, and both men knew they would run out of oxygen if they went on. They agreed to turn back. Says Michael Westmacott, Bourdillon's closest friend on the 1953 team: "It was a decision Tom always regretted."

So it was that three days later Hillary and Tenzing set out for the top. Their pairing was hardly an accident. "It had always been Hunt's intention, if feasible, to include a Sherpa in one of the summit teams, as a way of recognizing their invaluable contribution to the success of these expeditions," Band says. "Tenzing had already proved he had summit potential by his performance the previous year with Lambert.

In fact, he had been at least 4,000 feet (1,219 meters) higher than any of us!" Indeed, Tenzing (who died in 1986) was the most experienced Everest veteran alive, having participated in six previous attempts on the mountain dating all the way back to 1935. (To those who criticize the practice of leading paying clients on Everest, Himalayan Experience founder and longtime Everest guide Russell Brice has a barbed, half-joking response: "You know who the first guided client on Everest was? Ed Hillary.")

But Hillary, too, had proved his worth, seeming to grow stronger as the expedition progressed. Band notes that Hillary had also realized what a powerful team he and Tenzing

would make. "During the expedition, with hindsight, one can see that he made a deliberate effort to develop a good partnership with Tenzing," Band says. "It paid off. Hillary and Tenzing were the logical second party for the summit. But this was not determined at the outset, only during the course of the expedition as it evolved."

With an earlier start from a higher camp than Bourdillon and Evans's, Tenzing and Hillary reached the South Summit by 9 a.m. But the difficulties were far from over. After the South Summit, the ridge takes a slight dip before rising abruptly in a rocky spur some 40 feet (12 meters) high just before the true summit. Scraping at the snow with his ax, Hillary chimneyed between the rock pillar and an adjacent ridge of ice to surmount this daunting obstacle, later to be known as the Hillary Step. The pair reached the highest point on Earth at 11:30 a.m. on May 29.

The men shook hands, as Hillary later wrote, "in good Anglo-Saxon fashion," but then Tenzing clasped his partner in his arms and pounded him on the back. The pair spent only 15 minutes on top. "Inevitably my thoughts turned to Mallory and Irvine," Hillary wrote, referring to the two British climbers who had vanished high on Everest's Northeast Ridge in 1924. "With little hope I looked around for some sign that they had reached the summit, but could see nothing."

As the two men made their way back down, the first climber they met was teammate George Lowe, also a New Zealander. Hillary's legendary greeting: "Well, George, we knocked the bastard off!"

Their fame was spreading even as Hillary and Tenzing left the mountain. "When we came out toward Kathmandu, there was a very strong political feeling, particularly among the Indian and Nepalese press, who very much wanted to be

assured that Tenzing was first," Sir Edmund recalls today. "That would indicate that Nepalese and Indian climbers were at least as good as foreign climbers. We felt quite uncomfortable with this at the time. John Hunt, Tenzing, and I had a little meeting. We agreed not to tell who stepped on the summit first.

"To a mountaineer, it's of no great consequence who actually sets foot first. Often the one who puts more into the climb steps back and lets his partner stand on top first." The pair's pact stood until years later, when Tenzing revealed in his autobiography, *Tiger of the Snows*, that Hillary had in fact preceded him.

Neither man anticipated how much, in the wake of their success, the appeal of that patch of snow more than five miles in the sky would grow. "Both Tenzing and I thought that once we'd climbed the mountain, it was unlikely anyone would ever make another attempt," Sir Edmund admits today. "We couldn't have been more wrong."

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**May 29, 1953: Edmund Hillary took this photograph of Tenzing Norgay as they set foot on the summit of Mount Everest, the highest point on Earth. The ascent is acclaimed as the pinnacle of 20th-century athletic achievement.**



1953: Sir Edmund Hillary with Lord Willoughby Norrie, the Governor-General of New Zealand, and George Lowe, a New Zealand-born mountaineer and film director, at Government House, Wellington. In 1953, Lowe was a member of the British Mount Everest expedition led by John Hunt. On May 28, 1953, Lowe, Alfred Gregory and Sherpa Ang Nyima set out with Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay as the support party for their historic summit attempt. Their summit camp was established at 27,900 feet, then Lowe, Gregory and Ang Nyima descended to the South Col camp. The following day, May 29, Hillary and Tenzing successfully reached the summit of Mount Everest. During their descent to the South Col, Hillary and Tenzing were met by Lowe. It was then that Edmund Hillary delivered his immortal summary of their achievement: "Well, George, we knocked the bastard off." George Lowe went on to direct a documentary of the expedition, *The Conquest of Everest*, which was nominated for an Academy Award.





June 23, 1953: Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary pose for a portrait after being honored by King Tribhuvan of Nepal. Norgay was presented with the Nepal-Tara-Padak and Hillary received the Gorkha Dakshina Bahu.



At the 1973 Banquet of the Golden Plate ceremonies in Chicago, Awards Council chairman and pioneer newscaster Lowell Thomas presents the Academy's Golden Plate Award to Sherpa mountaineer, Tenzing Norgay, twenty years after Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary became the first two individuals to reach the summit of Mount Everest.





1953: New Zealand mountain climber Sir Edmund Hillary arriving at London Airport with his wife, Louise. They were married on September 3, 1953 soon after his ascent of Mount Everest. A shy man, he relied on his future mother-in-law to propose on his behalf. In 1975, while en route to join Hillary in Nepal, Louise and their teenage daughter, Belinda, were killed in a plane crash near the Kathmandu airport shortly after take-off.



**Nepalese greet Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, 1953.**



**Heroes rode into a welcoming throng in Temple Square of Bhandgaon in India. Tenzing stood in the leading jeep, while Hunt and Hillary sat in the second.**





**A celebration for Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, Nepal, 1953.**



**Devil dancers pranced in celebration in Temple Square.**



**Tenzing Norgay arrived in India after first ascent of Mt. Everest, 1953.**



**The reception for the 1953 Everest expedition, Nepal.**



# LIFE

IN THIS ISSUE

## STEP BY STEP TO THE TOP OF EVEREST WITH HILLARY AND TENZING

SIR EDMUND HILLARY

AND TENZING NORGEY



20 CENTS

JULY 13, 1953

Life Magazine Cover July 13, 1953.





MOVING DOWN AFTER TRIUMPH. HILLARY AND TENZING ARE STILL UNITED AND DELIGHTED

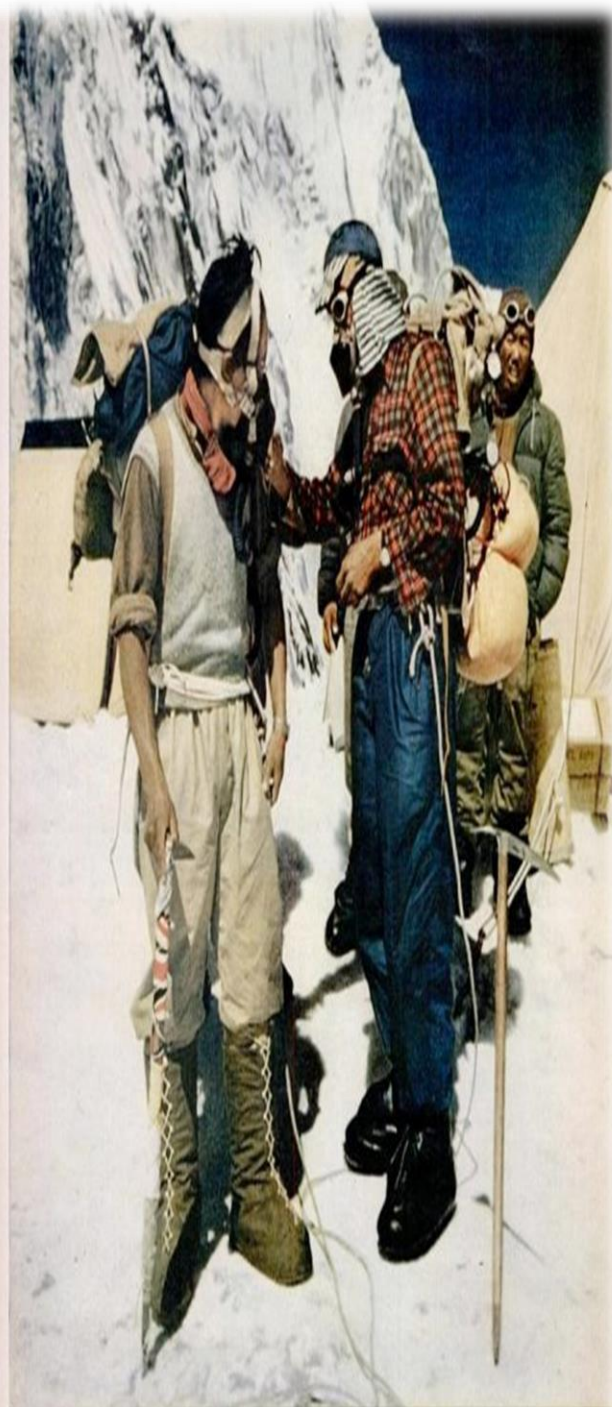
by SIR EDMUND P. HILLARY

At one p.m., we were greatly excited to see Evans and Boardman disappear over the south summit before they were blotted out by drifting clouds. By now Hunt and De Nangval were slowly descending South Gulch camp and they seemed in some distress we went up to meet and assist them. They were in an exhausted condition. Hunt, who had never spared himself throughout the trip, had made a magnificent effort and carried the loads some 130 feet above the old Swiss ridge camp to a height of approximately 27,300 feet. The two had then descended without oxygen in order to conserve supplies for the ascent. At 3 p.m. Evans and Boardman appeared out of the mist on the southeast ridge and moved very slowly down the steep couloir leading to South Gulch. They were obviously very tired after their tremendous effort and we went up to meet them with hot drinks and escorted them back to camp. They confirmed they had successfully reached the south summit—28,720 feet—and so had been far higher than men had ever been before. They reported that the ridge along to the top looked like a very formidable proposition.

After a restful night's sleep—the four of us used sleeping oxygen—we set off next morning in good heart for South Col. At 9:30, when we were nearly at the top of Untse glacier, we caught our first glimpse of tiny figures on the southeast ridge. It was Evans and Bourdillon.

South Col can rarely be a cheerful spot but the night of May 26

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 131



**MOVING UP,** Trexler (left) and Hillary test oxygen at 22,000 feet. Breivik looks, they are ready to take last supplies up to summit camp, where both will

and heavier clothing. Hillary is loaded as protection against wet and freezing weather. He carries flares fished up from the ice at his feet. In back is a Sherpa carrier, Ang Nima,

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



# QUOTES

- Good planning is important. I've also regarded a sense of humor as one of the most important things on a big expedition. When you're in a difficult or dangerous situation, or when you're depressed about the chances of success, someone who can make you laugh eases the tension.
- While on top of Everest, I looked across the valley towards the great peak Makalu and mentally worked out a route about how it could be climbed. It showed me that even though I was standing on top of the world, it wasn't the end of everything. I was still looking beyond to other interesting challenges.
- Despite all I have seen and experienced, I still get the same simple thrill out of glimpsing a tiny patch of snow in a high mountain gully and feel the same urge to climb towards it.
- I think my first thought on reaching the summit- of course, I was very, very pleased to be there, naturally - but my first thought was one of a little bit of surprise. I was a little bit surprised that here I was, Ed Hillary, on top of Mt. Everest. After all, this is the ambition of most mountaineers.
- If you cannot understand that there is something in man which responds to the challenge of this mountain and goes out to meet it, that the struggle is the struggle of life itself upward and forever upward, then you won't see why we go.
- I really haven't liked the commercialization of mountaineering, particularly of Mt. Everest. By paying \$65,000, you can be conducted to the summit by a couple of good guides.
- I really haven't liked the commercialization of mountaineering, particularly of Mt. Everest. By paying \$65,000, you can be conducted to the summit by a couple of good guides.
- If I wished to do something, even if I couldn't find anyone who wanted to make the effort with me, I would go out solo climbing. I did find solo climbing very challenging and a little frightening. You knew that you were completely on your own, and you had to overcome all the problems and possible dangers.

- I don't spend a lot of time thinking about dying, but I like to think that I've - if it did occur - that I would die peacefully and not make too much of a fuss about it.
- There is something about building up a comradeship - that I still believe is the greatest of all feats - and sharing in the dangers with your company of peers. It's the intense effort, the giving of everything you've got. It's really a very pleasant sensation.
- I can remember when I first went into the Himalayan area way back in 1951. Money, for instance, was not important at all to the local people. But now, finance has become just as important to them as it is to us, and this is a change maybe not for the better.
- Tourism is a very big economic benefit to the Sherpa people, and also, they have very strong ties to their own social attitudes and their own religion, so fortunately, they're not too influenced by many of our Western attitudes.
- I believe that of all the things I have done, exciting though many of them have been, there's no doubt in my mind that the most worthwhile have been the establishing of schools and hospitals, and the rebuilding of monasteries in the mountains.
- I like to think of Everest as a great mountaineering challenge, and when you've got people just streaming up the mountain - well, many of them are just climbing it to get their name in the paper, really.
- I believe that of all the things I have done, exciting though many of them have been, there's no doubt in my mind that the most worthwhile have been the establishing of schools and hospitals, and the rebuilding of monasteries in the mountains.
- I realised a little bit to my astonishment that I can give a lecture for a thousand people, and there will be this tumultuous applause, so, you know, I have the feeling well, it can't be all that bad.
- I think Himalayan climbers tend to mature fairly late. I think most of the successful Himalayan climbers have ranged from 28 to just over 40, really.

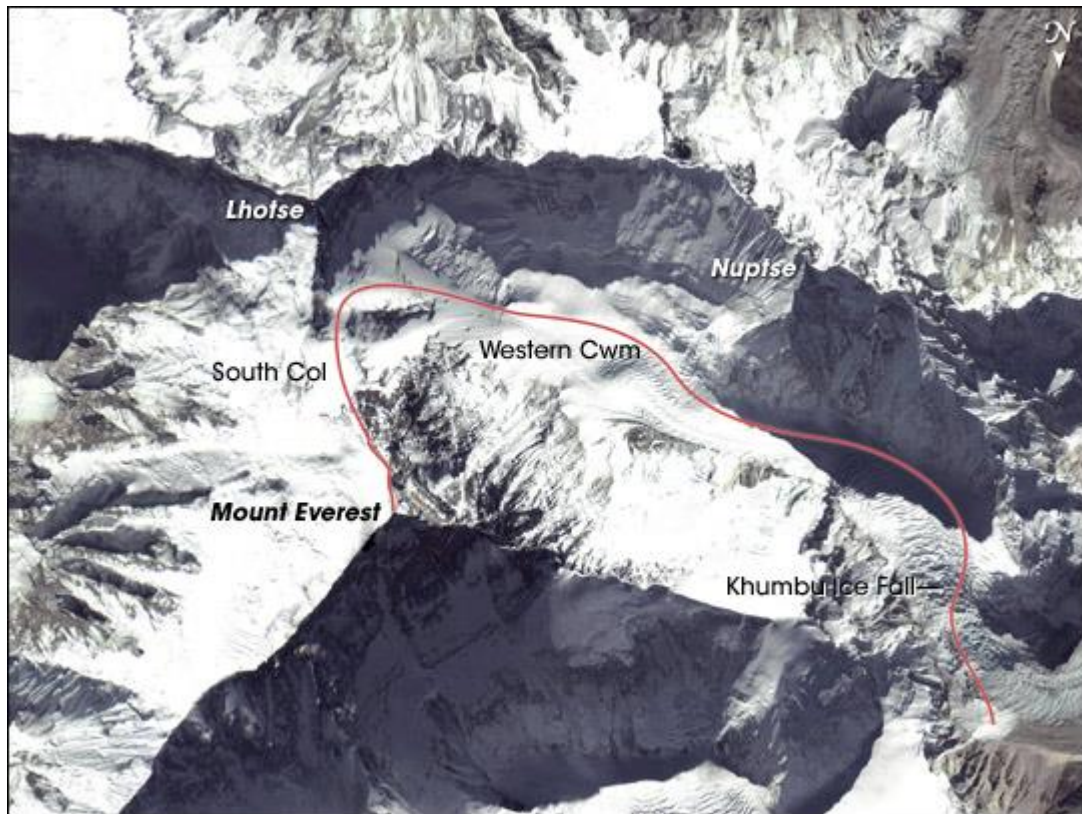


BrainyQuote

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## Edmund Hillary's Everest Route

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/8396/edmund-hillarys-everest-route>



At 6:30 a.m. on May 28, 1953, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay set out from a camp high above the South Col on the Southwest Face of Mount Everest and began the ascent for which both would become famous. Fighting through snow, winding along an exposed ridgeline with drops of over 1,000 meters (3,300 feet) on either side, scrambling up steep, rocky steps, and finally climbing a sloping snowfield, the pair reached the summit at 11:30 a.m. It was the first known climb of the world's tallest mountain.

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winding along an exposed ridgeline with drops of over 1,000 meters (3,300 feet) on either side, scrambling up steep, rocky steps, and finally climbing a sloping snowfield, the pair reached the summit at 11:30 a.m. It was the first known climb of the world's tallest mountain.

This image, captured by [GeoEye's](#) Ikonos satellite on November 29, 2001, shows an approximation of the route Hillary and Norgay followed, and some of the challenges Hillary and Norgay (and hundreds of later climbers) faced as they summited Mount Everest. The two climbers, Hillary from New Zealand and Norgay from Nepal, were part of a British climbing team. The team made their first camp below the Khumbu Ice Fall, a steep, rugged, and fast-moving section of the Khumbu Glacier. The dark lines that cut across the icefall resemble waves, hinting at the constant movement that opens deep crevasses and sends large chunks of ice tumbling freely down the mountain. After successfully crossing the Khumbu Icefall, the team walked up the Western Cwm. The glacial valley is smooth in this image, lacking the relief shown by the steep ridges around it. The Western Cwm leads to the south face of Lhotse and the South Col, a saddle between the pyramid-like peaks of Everest and Lhotse. At 7,920 m (26,000 ft), the South Col is typically the last camp on an Everest ascent, but Hillary and Norgay made their final camp an additional 610 meters (2,000 feet) above this point. A five-hour climb brought Hillary and Norgay to the top of the world.

Knighted by the newly crowned Queen Elizabeth before he even left the mountain, Hillary used his subsequent fame to improve the lives of the Nepalese people he had come to admire. He founded the Himalayan Trust to build clinics, hospitals, and schools in Nepal. He also continued mountaineering in the Himalayas and led expeditions to the South Pole. Sir Edmund Hillary died on January 11, 2008, at



the age of 88. Quoted in BBC News, Hillary said "I've had a full and rewarding life. Life's a bit like mountaineering—never look down."



HILLARY INSTITUTE

<https://www.hillaryinstitute.com/sir-edmund-full-bio>

## Sir Edmund Hillary



**Sir Edmund Hillary demonstrates outstanding human qualities of integrity, modesty, determination and service to others born of a lifetime of exceptional achievement.**

Best-known internationally as the first man to climb Mt. Everest in May 1953 with Tenzing Norgay, for the last 50 years he has devoted himself to environmental and humanitarian efforts that have made a profound difference to communities in Nepal where his famous summiting was achieved.

Born in Auckland, New Zealand, on July 20 1919, his father a bee-keeper and mother a teacher, Hillary was educated at Auckland Grammar School and spent two years at Auckland University before joining his father in the honey production business. During World War II he served as a navigator in the Pacific Theatre on RNZAF Catalina flying boats. His first contact with mountains came through a skiing trip at High School but his interests soon changed with ten years of weekends and holidays spent making a number of difficult first ascents in New Zealand's mountainous regions.

1951 was the beginning of Hillary's association with the Himalayas with four New Zealand climbers organising and financing their own trip to the Gawhal Himalaya and making first ascents of six peaks over 20,000 feet. This brought an invitation to join the British Everest reconnaissance party in September 1951 which discovered the route up the south side of Mt. Everest, which was later used in the successful ascent. Hillary was back in the Himalayas again in 1952 with the British Cho Oyu expedition, and on 29th May 1953 with Tenzing Norgay, he reached the summit during the successful assault of the British Mount Everest Expedition. Knighted by Queen Elizabeth II, Sir Edmund became both an international celebrity and a local hero.

In 1954 Hillary's interest turned to the Antarctic as leader of the New Zealand part of the British Trans Antarctic Expedition. He supervised the building of Scott Base in McMurdo Sound and wintered over with 22 companions. An extensive scientific and exploratory programme was undertaken and Hillary and four companions travelled overland with three modified farm tractors and became the first ever party with vehicles to reach the South Pole.

During 1960/61 Hillary returned to the Himalayas with a large scientific and mountaineering expedition establishing a specially insulated hut at 19,000 feet for high altitude research. A search for the Yeti concluded the creature was largely mythological. Several difficult first ascents were made including Mt Amadablam (22,300 ft.) but the party failed in its attempt to climb Makalu at 27,790 ft without oxygen. Hillary himself suffered a minor cerebral stroke at 21,000 ft but made a complete recovery.

During this expedition Hillary first took action on his growing concern for the Sherpa people's welfare. With finances donated by Field Enterprises Educational Corporation of Chicago, he co-operated with

the Sherpas to build Khumjung School at 12,600 ft - the first permanent school in the Mt Everest area. Hillary returned to the Himalayas annually and some fine first ascents were made by members of his parties. However more important to him was the building of seven schools, two water pipelines, four bridges and one mountain airfield. In 1966 he achieved a major ambition establishing a small hospital in the village of Kunde at 12,700 ft. For many years Hillary was President of NZ's Volunteer Service Abroad and he has tirelessly championed the need for increased aid to developing countries.

In 1953 Hillary married Louise Mary Rose and they had three children Peter, Sarah and Belinda. Lady Hillary was a musician and made a number of Himalayan journeys writing three books in the process. Hillary still found plenty of time for adventure, returning in 1967 to the Antarctic to first ascend Mt Herschel (11,700 ft), and in 1968 he tackled the turbulent rivers of east Nepal with two small jet boats. Although one boat sank in a violent rapid Hillary succeeded in travelling 180 miles from the Indian border up the Sun Kosi river to Kathmandu. By 1975, 17 mountain schools were in operation plus many fresh water pipelines and bridges along with a major hospital at Phaphlu and an airfield. During the course of this expedition Hillary's wife and youngest daughter died in the crash of a small plane that was flying from Kathmandu to join him at Phaphlu. Despite this tragedy the hospital and airfield were completed and other projects undertaken.

In 1985 appointed NZ High Commissioner to India, Nepal and Bangladesh Hillary spent  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years based in New Delhi, while still working in the Everest region. He has completed over 27 schools, two hospitals, 12 medical clinics, a reforestation programme in the Sagarmatha (Everest) National Park, plus numerous bridges and fresh water pipelines. All projects have been in response to requests from Sherpa people, and carried out with their assistance. Sir Edmund is a greatly loved and respected figure in the Solukhumbu region.

Hillary is an International Director of the World Wildlife fund and The UN Environmental Programme has also honoured him for conservation activities. In 1985 he accompanied astronaut Neil Armstrong in a small twin-engined ski plane over the Arctic Ocean and landed at the North Pole. He is believed to be the first person to reach the North and South Poles and the summit of Everest. His decorations and citations include:

- **Order of New Zealand**

- Founders Medal of the Royal Geographical Society
- Hubbard Medal of the National Geographical Society
- Polar Medal
- Commander Merite et Sportif
- Star of Nepal (1st Class)

An Honorary Member or Patron of many organisations and Honorary President of the Explorers Club (New York), Hillary has also been a long-term advisor to Sears Roebuck of Chicago and Toronto. He has received nine Honorary Doctorates and written eight books including: "East of Everest" (with George Lowe); "Schoolhouse in the Clouds" and "Two Generations" (with Peter Hillary).

From India Hillary returned home to Auckland in 1989, where he celebrated his 70th birthday and on December 21, married June Mulgrew, widow of old friend Peter Mulgrew who had travelled with him to the South Pole (and died in the Air New Zealand DC10 plane crash on Mt. Erebus). 1989 also saw famous Tengpoche Monastery at the foot of Mt Everest destroyed by fire and Hillary carried out a worldwide fund-raising, re-building programme. In May 1990 he had the unique experience of sitting in Auckland and talking by telephone to his own son standing on the summit of Everest. In 1991 he was appointed "UNICEF Special Representative for the Children of the Himalayas" and in 1995 received The Most Noble Order of the Garter from Queen Elizabeth II.

More than forty years after Sir Edmund's successful ascent of Mt Everest a four-part documentary of his life was written by NZ writer and cartoonist Tom Scott, finally going to air in September 1997. Sir Edmund has featured in numerous other documentaries around the world. In 1999, his biography "View from The Summit" was released, and he celebrated his 80th Birthday dinner hosted by NZ Governor General Sir Michael and Lady Hardie Boys.

In 2003 Sir Edmund celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the ascent of Everest in Nepal, with his Sherpa friends and Tenzing Norgay's family, and in 2004 formally re-embraced leadership development as the patron of the Excelerator: New Zealand Leadership Institute, and internationally through lending his name to the development of the Hillary Institute and Awards programme.



In January 2007 Sir Edmund returned to Antarctica for the final time for the 50 years celebration of his establishment of Scott Base for New Zealand. With Sir Ed in honoured attendance Prime Minister Helen Clark (as patron), formally launched The Hillary Institute there on January 22nd. New Zealanders take great pride in this extraordinary, ordinary man, a world-wide symbol of courage, determination, leadership and humanitarian service. Sir Edmund passed peacefully in Auckland, on the morning of Jan 11, 2008, and was accorded the rare honour of a state funeral on Jan 22nd.

2019 is Sir Ed's centenary year. He will forever be an inspiration to us all.



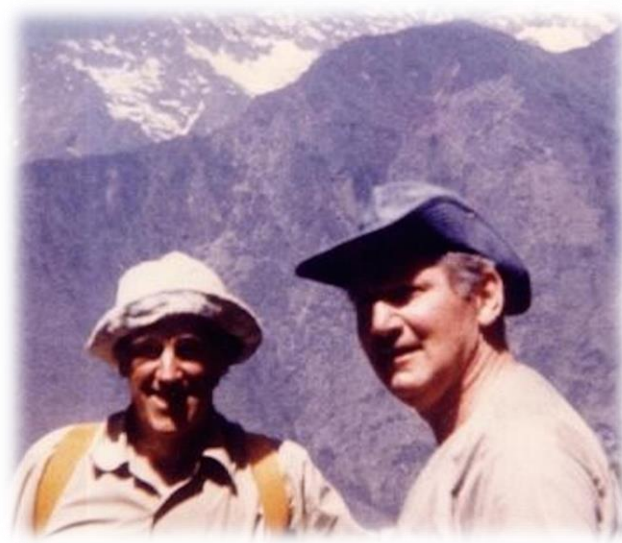
## The Sir Edmund Hillary Foundation

<https://thesiredmundhillaryfoundation.ca/>

The Sir Edmund Hillary Foundation (SEHF) is dedicated to the support of the Sherpa people of Nepal. Our goal is to support initiatives in the areas of education, the environment and health care that help to empower and sustain the Sherpa people and their culture.

The Sir Edmund Hilary Foundation (SEHF) of Canada was founded in 1974 by Zeke O'Connor and Sir Edmund Hillary. The two cemented a life-long friendship and partnership in service following a 1973 trip to Nepal, where Zeke was invited to join Sir Edmund on an expedition to Mount Everest

Now, nearly 50 years after that first visit, the SEHF continues to raise funds and support for the Sherpa people in the areas of education, environment and health care.



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# Edmund Hillary

**Sir Edmund Percival Hillary**, Order of the Garter (KG), Order of New Zealand (ONZ), Order of the British Empire (KBE) (July 20, 1919 - January 11, 2008) was a New Zealand mountaineer and explorer. On May 29, 1953 at the age of 33, he

and Sherpa mountaineer Tenzing Norgay became the first climbers known to have reached the summit of Mount Everest. They were part of the ninth British expedition to Everest, led by John Hunt.

Hillary became interested in mountaineering while in high school, making his first major climb in 1939, reaching the summit of Mount Ollivier. He served in the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) as a navigator during World War II. Before the successful expedition in 1953 to Everest, he had been part of a reconnaissance expedition to the mountain in 1951 and an unsuccessful attempt to climb Cho Oyu in 1952. As part of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition, he reached the South Pole overland in 1958. He would later also travel to the North Pole.

Following his ascent of Everest, he devoted much of his life to helping the Sherpa people of Nepal through the Himalayan Trust, which he founded. Through his efforts many schools and hospitals were built in this remote region of the Himalayas. The real value of his legacy lies in its inspirational aspects; even as humanity was reaching for the stars<sup>[1]</sup> some of its highest mountains, deepest oceans and most remote regions remained largely unexplored. Only when humanity fully understands the planet can it rise to the challenge of preserving the earth as a sustainable habitat for all its occupants.

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## THE WISDOM OF SIR EDMUND HILLARY

<https://www.adventure-journal.com/2021/07/the-wisdom-of-sir-edmund-hillary/?srsltid=AfmBOogzYJ80a8ZO7WextgcxJPKsAz14cDZAbXm6UoTq0fcwNeOtpN3I>

Today would be Sir Edmund Hillary's 102nd birthday. The man was so even-keeled, consistent, and determined, it's almost a surprise he isn't still climbing somewhere, his long, mournful face pointed up at a sun-washed peak, alone in his element.

Humble, filled with perspective from being among the (likely) first two people to reach the summit of Everest and after a lifetime of scaling tough alpine peaks, Hillary is one of the most quotable, and blessedly relatable adventure greats. On this, his 102nd birthday, we've put together 11 of our favorite bits of wisdom from Sir Edmund, everyone's favorite New Zealander who is most often mistakenly assumed to be British.

*Life's a bit like mountaineering - never look down.*

*Despite all I have seen and experienced, I still get the same simple thrill out of glimpsing a tiny patch of snow in a high mountain gully and feel the same urge to climb towards it.*

*Human life is far more important than just getting to the top of a mountain.*

*I have never regarded myself as a hero, but Tenzing undoubtedly was. (Said at the unveiling of a Tenzing Norgay statue in 1997).*

*There is precious little in civilization to appeal to a Yeti.*

*I was scared many times on Everest, but this is all part of the challenge. When I fell down a crevasse, it was pretty scary.*

*Well, we knocked the bastard off! (Said to George Lowe as Hillary and Norgay were descending Everest after their successful climb).*



*Better if he had said something natural like, "Jesus, here we are." (In response to Neil Armstrong's first words on the moon).*

*You don't have to be a fantastic hero to do certain things — to compete. You can be just an ordinary chap, sufficiently motivated to reach challenging goals. The intense effort, the giving of everything you've got, is a very pleasant bonus.*

*We didn't know if it was humanly possible to reach the top of Mt. Everest.*

*I have discovered that even the mediocre can have adventures and even the fearful can achieve.*

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